

Is this a Bluegill or a Large Mouth Bass?

This was a common question at this year's Conservation World at the Livingston County 4-H Fair. Kids of all ages tried their luck at fishing in our pond that was stocked with six species of fish that are native to Illinois streams. After pulling in their catch, kids went over to a poster that showed them how to identify their fish. Since this was a "catch and release" event, kids were then allowed to throw their catch back in the pond and try again.



Just a reminder....If fishing is your game, the SWCD has fish for pond stocking. See the sale flyer in this newsletter.

Fishin' For Some "Toad-ally" Cool Fun?

"Fishin' For Some 'Toad-ally' Cool Fun? Hop On In!" was the theme of Livingston County's 2006 4-H Fair activity tent. Our exhibit included a 20 foot pond made from a blue tarp and landscape edging. In the pond were 6 species of Illinois fish (Bluegill, Large Mouth Bass, Green Sunfish, Crappie, Catfish and Carp), lily pads, ducks, frogs and a turtle. The kids had a good time trying to catch the fish (made from felt) with their bamboo poles. To catch the fish, the poles had hooks that were washers covered with heavy-duty Velcro. After catching a fish, the kids would then identify it with the assistance of a poster.

While kids waited their turn to fish, we had a game of Lily Pad Leap Frog in one end of the pond that was more challenging than one would have thought. The lily pads were made from shelf liner and the bean bag frogs came from Oriental Trading.

To put an educational twist to this activity, each fish had a colored dot on it. Each color of dot represented a different category of question. Our question categories were on Illinois crops, critters, conservation and state symbols. If the child was able to answer the question correctly, they received a small prize such as a frog or fish sticker.

The neat thing....the kids didn't care if they won a prize. They just wanted to fish and to try and identify their catch. This was a "catch & release" pond. No fish were allowed to go home. After identifying their fish and trying their luck at a question, the kids were allowed to "throw" their catch back in the pond.



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